



TO: COLUMBIA ASSOCIATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS
FROM: SHERI V.G. FANAROFF
RE: PRE-FILED LEGISLATION
DATE: OCTOBER 2, 2020

Although there had been discussions regarding the possibility of scheduling a special session of the General Assembly during the fall of this year, it has been decided that such a special session will not be held. I have attached a letter from the Speaker of the House and the President of the Senate explaining that decision and outlining some of the issues likely to be addressed by the General Assembly during the 2021 session. There is no pre-filed legislation at this time.

BILL FERGUSON
PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE



ADRIENNE A. JONES
SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE

MARYLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY
STATE HOUSE
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401-1991

September 17, 2020

Colleagues:

Yesterday, we stopped by the rally calling for a Special Session this fall. While we were not invited, we thought it was important for the advocacy community – many of whom are our friends, supporters and family in the struggle - to hear directly from us why we do not intend to have a special session. We have talked with Senators and Delegates throughout the summer about this but wanted to jointly articulate our feelings to you again.

We feel strongly that having a special session this fall would require the General Assembly to act on generational initiatives for Maryland with imperfect information that will only be clear after the November 2020 Presidential election. This will be one of the most critical federal elections in our lifetimes and will yield radically different landscapes about Maryland's financial and civic stability for the future. Convening before January 2021 would be a misstep and a disservice to the people of Maryland.

The passion of the advocates and the pain of Marylanders in need is real. We feel that as we know all of you do. The country is facing compounding crises stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic and federal incompetence: housing and food insecurity, disruption to our children's education, police brutality and record unemployment - and we are not immune to the effects of any of this in Maryland.

Between the House and the Senate, we have held hundreds of hours of briefings, heard and received testimony from thousands of Marylanders to prepare for real legislative solutions, and worked continuously on constituent casework for our neighbors to solve individual problems. You all know that passing legislation is not the same as branding a slogan. This work requires research, fact-based solutions and consensus building, which is always harder on the most difficult and impactful issues. To move forward with rushed policies that don't actually include necessary resources or legal authority to solve problems would be a disservice to all Marylanders.

The worst outcome would be to call a special session and not have consensus or the resources needed to achieve results: giving people hope for solutions that we cannot guarantee in a rushed environment, severely altered convening format, and uncertain funding landscape.

The stakes are too high and failure is not an option.

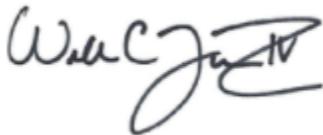
Maryland is facing an \$800 million deficit this year and a potential \$3.4 billion deficit next year. As noted, the outcome of November's election will provide radically different financial pictures for Maryland's future, and we need to act to solve problems, not just appear to. Without greater clarity of federal support for state and local governments, we put these generational solutions at risk.

In January, we are committing to have real solutions to:

- Police accountability and reform;
- Decoupling from the federal tax provisions and clawing back any unjust funding to corporations;
- Permanent fixes to vote by mail laws;
- Improvements to working conditions for workers; and
- Long-term housing stability.

In the meantime, we will continue to what we have done since we left on March 18th - connect Marylanders to safety net services and supports; hold agencies accountable for protecting people; pressure the Governor to support those struggling Marylanders who could be assisted today with a stroke of his pen; and do the complex work of preparing legislation that helps solve the dynamic problems in our midst. We know that each Senator and Delegate has been working nonstop to support communities across Maryland - and we thank you for it. We have to work together and rely on each other to get through this.

Last night, we told these Marylanders to give us a chance and have faith in the hard working members of the General Assembly. These issues are too important to get wrong, and we are confident that by working together we can be successful for Marylanders when we reconvene in January.



Bill Ferguson
Senate President



Adrienne A. Jones
Speaker of the House